PART I

FAMILY LIFE

KINSHIP SYSTEM

601 Whether the social unit under consideration be the temporary village or the nomadic band, the kinship system of the Nambikwara can as a whole be described as follows.

For any subject, male or female, all the members of his generation are divided into four large groups, that is two male groups [18] and two female groups. If the subject under consideration is a man, all the men of his generation will be divided into brothers and husbands of sisters (or brothers-in-law); while the women are divided into sisters and wives. In the same way, if the subject is a woman, all her female companions will be designated as sisters or as wives of brothers (sisters-in-law); and her male companions will share the names of brothers or husbands. Thus a man calls wife a number of women considerably larger than the number of his true wives, even if he is polygamous. And the woman, even though she is always monogamous, calls probably half of the men of her generation by the name of husband. In the same way brothers and sisters are far more numerous than actual brothers and sisters, that is, blood relatives. These latter are distributed into two sub-groups, the older brothers and the younger brothers in one, the older sisters and the younger sisters in the other. The term used to designate younger (blood) brothers and younger (blood) sisters also serves to designate "brothers" and "sisters" who are not blood relations, whatever their age may be compared to the subject under consideration.

A subject, male or female, calls his blood father father and all the latter's brothers; he calls his own mother mother and all her sisters. Reciprocally, all his "fathers" and all his "mothers" call him by the name of child, son, or daughter.

A single term is likewise used to designate the father of the father (or of the mother), the wife's father, and the mother's brother, while one and the same term serves to designate the mother of the father (or of the mother), the wife's mother, and the father's sister. But, contrary to the preceding case, there exists no reciprocal term. The father (or the mother) of my father and of my mother call me by a term connotating parents to the third generation, while my spouse's father and my mother's brother, on one hand (regularly identified), the mother of my spouse and my father's sister, on the other hand

60 (regularly identified), call me by a name meaning nephew and son-in-law, niece and daughter-in-law at the same time. Thus spouse's parents and my parents's parents identified when I name them, distinguish themselves when they answer me, since they use different terms as regards me.

Passing from the direct line to the collateral line, a generation is lost, since the same term is used to designate the parents of the spouse or the parents' parents. A grand-nephew is thus theoretically separated from his great-uncles by four levels of kinship, while he is only three degrees away in kinship from his grand-parents, who nevertheless identify themselves with his great-uncles, for the brother of the mother or the sister of the father are identified with the father and the mother of the spouse, as the scheme opposite indicates.

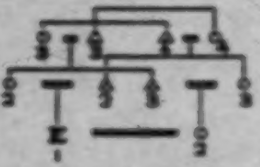

Fig. 1.

[19] Great-uncles (or aunts] thus use a new term to designate their grand-nephews (or nieces), connotating relatives to the fourth degree, while their descendants employ, to call them, the term already used in the direct line, but not yet in the collateral line, serving to designate relatives to the second degree. This last term serves thus, in direct line, to designate the third generation in line of descent, and the third ascending generation in collateral line, equivalent in descending line to the fourth degree. These remarks lead to the conclusion that the Nambikwara make no distinction between generations and degrees of kinship. A difference of one generation is to them equal to a removal of one degree.

That suggested, and within the same generation, all the individuals whom I call husband (or wife) are the sons (or daughters) of the "brothers" (blood or not) of my mother, and of the sisters (blood or not) of my father, that is, of the brothers of my mother (who are at the same time the "brothers-in-law" of my father), or of the sisters of my father (who are at the same time the "sisters-in-law" of my mother). And all the individuals whom I call brothers or sisters are the children of my father's brothers or my mother's sisters, that is, of the "wives" of my father (who are at the same time my "mothers"), or of the "husbands" of my mother (who are at the same time my

601 "mothers"), or of the "husbands" of my mother (who are at the same time my "fathers"). It is seen then that a given individual calls all his parallel cousins "brothers and sisters," and his parallel uncles and aunts "fathers and mothers", while he calls his cross-cousins husbands or wives, and his cross-aunts and uncles "father-in-law and mother-in-law" (identified with grandfather and grandmother, thus, more exactly: parents to the second degree). The confusion between gen-
601 erations and degrees thus makes equally possible the marriage of the
582 brother of the mother or of the father, to the daughter of the sister or of the brother, or of the sister of the father with the son of the brother, since, in these two cases, the parents-in-law will be the grandparents, called thus, by the term of parents to the second degree. These marriages, which we shall call "oblique," since they unite individuals belonging to two consecutive generations, are actually practiced.

601 Below is to be found the list of terms of relationship, as they have just been analyzed in their respective relations (Dialect A 1/2).

1.	ahųĩnosu (a 1); ahųĩne (a2)	father, brother of the father, husband of the mother's sister,
2.	aɂihĩenosu (a 1); aɂhĩetosu (a2)	mother, sister of the mother, wife of the father's brother,
3.	ųeitu, ųeizu	child,
4.	aɂkĩtaru	son,
5.	aɂkĩnera	daughter,
6.	akenaĩosu	older brother,
7.	(t)odĩosu	older sister,
[20] 8.	aidĩsu	younger brother, son of brother of the father, son of sister of the mother,
9.	ariɂadesu	younger sister, daughter of brother of the father, daughter of sister of mother,
10.	asthosu	sister's husband, cross-cousin (masc.) (man speaking),
11.	asedtasu	brother's wife, cross-cousin (fem.) (woman speaking),
12.	asɂĩsu	sister's daughter (m. s.), brother's daughter (w. s.), son's wife,
13.	asinedru	sister's son (m. s.), brother's son (w. s.), daughter's husband,

14. asodnosu	father of the father or of the mother, brother of mother, father of spouse.
15. aʔéinosu	mother of the father or mother, sister of father, mother of spouse.
16. asuí'ttu	son (or daughter) of the son (or of the daughter), brother (or sister) of the father (or mother) of the father (or of the mother).
17. asué'lisu	son (or daughter) of the son (or of the daughter) of the brother (w. s.) or of the sister (m. s.).
18. asiétu (a 1); (tsí) dosu (a2)..	wife, daughter of the brother of the mother, daughter of the sister of the father.
19. ouétsaetu (a 1); (tsí)nosu (a2)..	husband, son of the brother of the mother, son of the sister of the father.

The following scheme shows their utilization in this theoretic group:

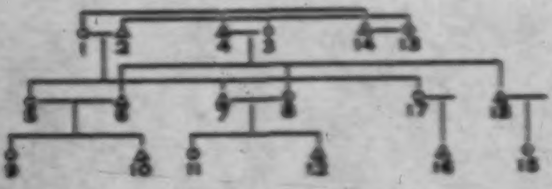

Fig. 2.

60| As concerns a male subject E 10:

1- 3. aʔeinosu
2- 4. asoũnosu rec. : asuirtu
13-14. asuĩ'tu rec.: asuelisu
5-17. aʔkenosu rec.: aʔkiraru
6-18. ahuĩ'nosu rec.: aʔkĩ'taru
[21] 7. asoũnosu rec.: asineẽru
8. aʔeinosu rec.: asineẽru
9. arĩ'ndesu or (t)oẽnosu rec.: akenãnosu or alõnsu
11. asiẽtu rec.: oyẽnsaesu
12. asũkosu rec.: asũkosu (if the subject chosen is e 9 woman, E12 will be oyẽnsaesu and e 11 aseẽtasu, rec.: aseẽtasu)
15. arĩ'ndesu rec.: alõnsu
16. alõnsu rec.: arĩ'ndesu

If one does not keep account of the reciprocal use of the terms, normally univocal, alõnsu and arĩ'ndesu in the case of parallel cousins, this nomenclature only includes univocal terms, with the exception of two: asũkosu and aseẽtasu, and each sex has at its disposition only one of these two reciprocal terms; in other words, a man has only brothers-in-law, while a woman has only sisters-in-law. It will be seen below that as concerns the first term (asũkosu), it implies particular relations between the men who use it.

The extreme simplicity of the system of course leads to some difficulties of nomenclature when one desires to distinguish degrees of parentage confounded by the system. In the same way its extreme symmetry risks bringing about contradictions when "oblique" marriages bring transfers between generations. To the classificatory nomenclature analyzed above is superimposed—or added—a descriptive nomenclature, which permits, in case of difficulty, placing the individual in the generation with more precision, or according to the degree of kinship which he holds with respect to the subject. This descriptive [55] nomenclature is not currently used, and above all, it never intervenes in naming. But it is consulted each time there is some doubt, and in some cases more frequent usage can be pointed out.

The first difficulty might be produced concerning the distinction of the real husband or wife, compared to the theoretical husbands or wives, or of the true father or mother compared to the theoretical

601 husbands or wives, or of the true father or mother compared to the theoretical "fathers" or "mothers," or of true sons or daughters as compared to theoretical "sons" and "daughters." In most cases, the discrimination seems totally superfluous to the Indians, since it is so well accented by the differences of behavior. Sometimes also it seems useless because of the inverse of the preceding, the theoretical wife can become a real wife (for example in case of polygamy, or of remarriage), the theoretical father or mother, or the theoretical son [608] or daughter, can play the role of true father or mother, or of true son or daughter, through the mechanism of adoption. This functions automatically, in the case of the father's death, the child then being [22] [769] taken in and raised by its father's brother. In this case his father's brother, whom he has always called father, becomes for him a real father even though by substitution, and the wife of his father's brother, who is most often his mother's sister, and whom he has consequently always called mother, is from then on treated by him as such, especially if his own mother is dead or has remarried. However, sometimes the Indians wish to sharpen the theoretical character of the name. Then they add to the classifying term a descriptive term, whose approximate meaning is that of "relative" in the most general sense, as,

20. (akit) ajdnisu,

used in the substantive form: above, or in the participial form ajdnere; or in the exclamatory form, in conversation, ajdneram.

Thus we have found the following appelations,

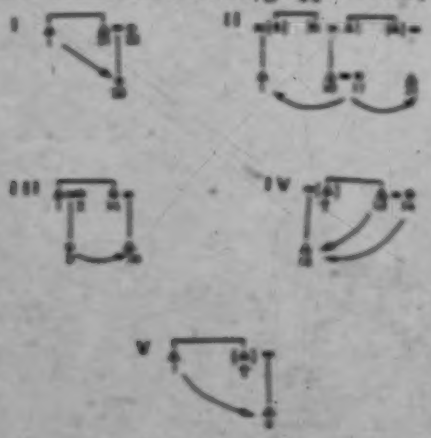

Fig. 3

I. aʔkineru ajdneram. --II. (t)ogennaetu ajdnisu. III. ogennaetu ajdnisu (among children). IV. tayettu aʔkiraru ajdneram. --V. akineram (aʔkirarâ ajdneram).

601 A second difficulty comes up in the designation of parallel cousins. It has been seen above that the same name is used for them which designates the younger sister or the younger brother, whatever their age may be. This [23] usage suggests that the adequate translation of the terms aldtisu, akenánosu, arïndesu, (t)oánosu could be, rather than "elder" and "younger," big brother, big sister, little brother, little sister, with the same ambiguity that exists in our language between the real sense of the adjective and its figurative sense. Be that as it may, one often comes up against a contradictory situation, not only objectively (which does not shock Indian logic, as will be seen in the case of "mothers" younger than their "sons"), but also literally. This is what happens when for example, a woman calls a female cousin arïndesu who is quite obviously her elder. Then one has recourse to two supplementary terms, sometimes added to classifying terms; but also sometimes replacing them, even when it is a question of designating blood brothers or sisters. These are:

21. toá-nosu : "elder" (to designate a man);

22. toátadosu : "elder" (to designate a woman).

These terms serve to sharpen the respective position, regarding the generation, for those who are:

23. arifnãdesu, or

24. alonennõdesu,

that is, "one as regards the other of the arïndesu," or "the aldtsu," which is not permissible in certain instances; while two women can be without difficulty:

25. asetaenãdesu

or two men:

26. asukothõdesu,

that is, "the one for the other," asentasu or asikosu. Thus we have found women who call their parallel cousins arïndesu toátadosu, meaning, "my elder little sister."

601 Other difficulties appear in the case of oblique marriages. When
512 the mother's brother marries the sister's daughter, the woman's grandparents are at the same time the husband's parents. When the husband marries one or several daughters of his wife's sister, his own parents are simultaneously the parents-in-law and the great-uncles of his wives. Thence the frequent necessity to differentiate more precisely than the classifying terms permit between mother's and the father's sisters, on one side (that is the potential parents-in-law), and the fathers and mothers of the father and mother (that is the eventual
601 parents-in-law of one of the spouses). The [24] following terms, then,

601 are found which complete (or substitute for) the classifying terms aʔɛ̨nosu, asodnosu, ahuřnosu, aʔkénosu:

27. ari'ndagresu : "mother's mother";
28. oyensaferosu : "mother's father";
29. aseetagresu : "father's mother";
30. aludnarusu : "father's father";
31. aʔɛ̨ndagresu : "sister of the mother's mother."

The etymology of the terms verifies the principal of marriage of cross-cousins. In fact, if one has:

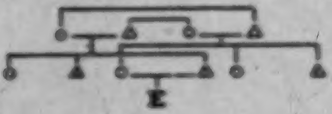

Fig. 4.

it is established that:

arindagresu (or arindaherosu, "little old sister"), is the sister of my father's father;

oyensaferosu (from oyetsaesu, "husband") is the husband of my mother's mother;

aseetagresu (or aseetaherosu, "old sister-in-law") is the sister-in-law of my mother's mother;

aludnarusu (from aldnsu, "brother") is the brother of my mother's mother.

Concerning uncles and aunts, their name is sharpened by descriptive terms:

32. akɛ̨ntagresu, atiharusu: "mother's sister";
33. akaterosu : "mother's brother";
34. ayudnosu : "father's sister."

No descriptive term has been found for the father's brother, normally [768] called father (ahyinosu): perhaps this lack is to be explained by his position as father in case of the blood father's death.

On the other hand, the following descriptive termshave been collected in the course of attempts at geneological reconstruction, but it was not possible to determine for certain the levels or degrees of parentage to which they refer. It is possible that they are employed jointly with certain of the preceding terms:

601 35. tanftarosu : "old brother-in-law" (tanfte [b 1/2] equals asukosu [a 1/2]);

36. tuftarosu : "old husband" (ṷiʼte [b 1/2] equals oyensaesu [a 1/2]);

37. ianéhosu : ?

38. asoukerosu : "old grandfather" or "father-in-law";

[26] [76 ½] 39. takaʔkenosu cited with the commentary : "When the takaʔkenosu dies, the aldosu cut their hair, but not the akenanosu."

Finally, two terms of relationship express the relations coming from "oblique" marriages and from the division of generations into "elders" and "younger":

40. ajunkedisu;

41. (t)adirikisu.

A man calls the akenanosu of his mother ajunkedisu (while the term asouhosu is generally—but not always—reserved for the aldosu): one and the other are, of course, the asuhosu of his father. The same individual is then called "father-in-law" (asouhosu) or "husband" (oyensaesu) by the sister of the subject considered, or, if she is married, ajunkedisu also, the husband then calling him "father" (ahuʼhosu). One sees then that the ajunkedisu is a man whose daughter or wife I (masculine subject) marry, and whose son my sister marries, if she does not marry the man himself. Thus it is explained that the ajunkedisu is asuhosu or asouhosu, to my brother; asuhosu or asineʼtu, to my father; akenanosu or asineʼtu, to my mother; oyensaesu or asouhosu, to my sister; ahuʼhosu, to my wife.

On the other hand, a man calls a woman (t)adirikisu who can be arʼndesu or asintu of his father, aseʼtasu or asiʼntu of his mother, aseʼtasu or aʔeʔnosu of his sister, aseʼnosu of his wife. She is then a woman whom I marry or whose daughter I marry. A woman, in her turn, calls another woman (t)adirikisu who is aʔkendesu of her husband, that is, a woman whose brother or son she marries.

601 342 One sees that these two names bestow two privileges, or opens a double right: that of the marriage of the mother's brother (and, theoretically, of the father's brother) with his niece; a right belonging essentially to the elder brother; and of the marriage of the sister's son (brother's son) with his aunt. This rule, or rather this possibility is explained on the one hand by the tendency of the Nambikwara towards polygamy, on the other hand, by the scarcity (moreover consecutive) of women. We shall study examples in an instant.

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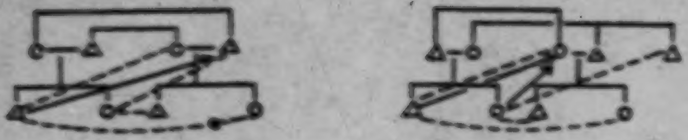

Fig. 5.

Left equals *ajĩnkedisu*; right equals *tãdirikisu*.

[26] In the nomenclature of the terms utilized for the description of relationships of parentage, we shall cite again;

42. *asĩheru* (a 1/2) *geitetere* (b 1/2): "widower, widow,"
43. *koaade* (b 1) : "orphan (masc.)";
44. *koadare* (b 1) : "orphan (fem.)".

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As we have just seen, the terms *ajĩnkedisu* and *(t)ãdirikisu* appear as tentatives for the solutions of ambiguous situations coming from an oblique marriage. These are only partially successful, since my parents always have the possibility of interpreting, in two different ways, their relationship of parentage concerning my *ajĩnkedisu* or my *(t)ãdirikisu*. Most often, these ambiguities are left without solution, or else one of the two following phenomena happens: each member of the family interprets his relation to the doubtful relative in the way easiest for him, without worrying about the fact that the different names in use might appear grossly contradictory; or else the relative—or the bloc of relatives—in doubt are shifted by one generation or by one degree of proximity as a means of rationalizing the structure. These difficulties appear especially in the case of polygamous unions. These are generally realized in the form of an encroachment of one or several women belonging to the younger (*génération inférieure*) generation than the one into which they should have—sometimes already have—married normally. Here is a striking illustration, where the complexity of relationships to the younger generation follows an oblique marriage to the older generation.

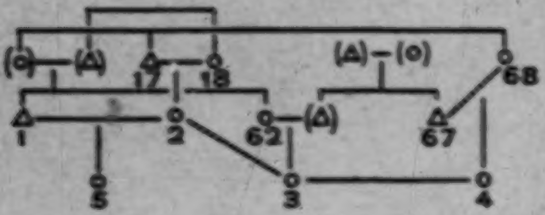

Fig. 6.

This is what happens: A1 married his cross-cousin a2, by whom he has a little daughter a5. Later on, he married two young women: one (a3) whose father is dead; the other, a4, whose father was the brother of the father of a3 and was called "husband" by a2 who also called the mother of a4 "sister-in-law." This established, a4, and a3 are, for A1 and a2, "daughters" or "daughters-in-law." Since A1 married them, they have become, by promotion:

For a2, "little sisters" (arfudetsu);

[27] For a5 (for whom they should normally have been sisters or sisters-in-law), "mothers" or "mother's sisters";

For A1, wives.

And while his wife a2 continues to give to the parents-in-law of her husband the old name of husband (oghnaenu) and of sister-in-law (asedtasu), he now calls them parents-in-law, that is asothosu and [illegible]su.

Another case presents the following combination:

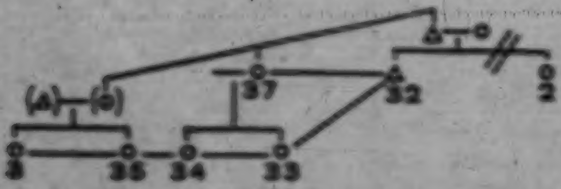

Fig. 7

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A man marries a woman and subsequently her four "daughters" (probably two blood daughters from the preceding marriage, and two parallel nieces). In this case, a2 calls the older wife aʔenosu, and the four young ones aseetasu, from which one can conclude that A32 has married at the same time his (t)adirikisu and the latter's daughters.

Finally, in this third case:

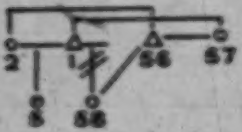

Fig. 8.

Normally, a2 calls a57 aseetasu (wife of her brother), but she disregards the fact that a58 is in the same situation, and keeps for her the name which she gave her before her marriage to A56, of tayetsu (my child, daughter of her husband). Her own daughter a5 normally calls a57 aʔenosu (wife of the mother's brother), and a58 todnosu (older sister), however, she could marry and call the son of her "mother-in-law" husband as well as the son of her "sister."

Thus the Indians treat abnormal situations resulting from polygamous unions in two ways. Either they admit the creation of a new situation and bless it by revising the names (the newly-married wives are promoted to the class of "mothers," and their parents to the class of [28] "parents of the third degree"; the women are then separated in nomenclature from their former brothers, sisters, sisters-in-law and husbands, who become sons, daughters, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law); or else the former names are simply preserved, the practical knowledge of the situation supplanting the impropriety of the language.

601 But these uncertainties, which appear in the case of verbal contradictions, are completely absent in the presence of real contradictions. These latter are admitted as normal consequences of the system, or more exactly, they are not considered as contradictions. Thus:

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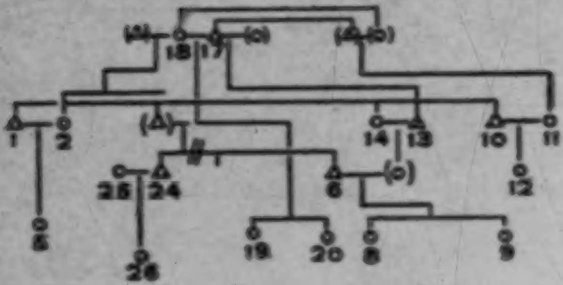

Fig. 9

A17, a man of about 55 years, married a18 (about 50 years) and has by her two daughters, a19 (about 12 years) and a20 (about 6 years). a18 has from a former marriage, a daughter a2 (about 30 years) married to A1 (about 35 years); the latter has taken a son A24 from an older dead brother; this son, himself married and the father of a baby, is about 26 years old. A17 and a18 are then "asouhosu" and "ae'ʔiposu". The daughter a2 of a18 is a "aʔhenosu," mother of a daughter of 8 or 9 years, a5. Under these conditions, the two little girls a19 and a20 are likewise "mothers," and they are called "aʔhenosu" by:

a5 : their contemporary [feminine];
A6 : their elder [masculine] (about 25 years);
a12 : their elder [feminine] (about 22 years);
A24 : their elder [masculine] (about 26 years);

and consequently they are called "grandmother" by:

a8 : their contemporary [feminine] (about 6 years);
a9 : their junior [feminine] (about 3 years);

the daughters of A6; and, in fact, a2, who is a "mother," normally calls them "little sisters."

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184 [29] The system of parentage of the central, southern, and western groups (dialects b 1 and b2) does not present any fundamental difference as concerns the preceding. The degrees of parentage distinguished are less numerous; on the contrary, one finds quite a great variety of terms used to designate a set degree. The fact that the informants use several terms to qualify their situation as concerns a certain subject suggests that these terms are often synonyms, even though their etymological sense is not always perfectly clear.

60| Grandparents are most often singled out among themselves, and |84 distinguished from the parents of the spouse, which does not happen in system a (1 or 2); also, the son (or daughter) of the brother (or the of the sister) of the father (or of the mother) are sometimes designated by different terms. The groups studied are not dense enough to be able to make a base for a theory of the system in force. Solutions of replacement intervene frequently, and the preferential forms of marriage found are not adequate for generalizations, due to an insufficient number of cases. But the preceding considerations suggest that prefer- [512] ential unions, choosing also among certain categories of cross-cousins, could formerly have been in force.

Finally, the names for brothers (and sisters), elder and younger, are more changeable than in system a (1 or 2); and one sees appear a new term designating the brother or the sister of the other sex. This [77] disorganization of vocabulary can be interpreted as resulting from the influence of the northern system (dialect c), where we shall see later on that it tends more and more to assimilate the system of groups b.

Here is the vocabulary of parentage used, with references to group a (1/2): [Note: m. s. = man speaking; w. s. = woman speaking; m. w. s. = man or woman speaking.]

Dialect a 1/2		Dialect b 1/2	
ahu'nose	1.	(ta)mi'nde	(my) father, father's brother.
	2.	e'nde	father (equals man).
	3.	usi'ye	father (used to designate absent father, or father of a third person, or the father's brother.
	4.	(ta)mi'alacre	father's brother (equals other father).
	5.	(ta)mindé'ainere	father (father's brother when he substitutes for dead father).
a?i'nose	6.	(ta)nãde	(my) mother, mother's sister.
	7-8.	(ta)nãde'lacre, nãdore	mother (other mother; for the mother's sister and the mother of a third).

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	9.	denaudinere	mother (wife of the father's brother. cf. 5)
[30] pettu	10.	pette	child.
	11.	namade	small child, baby.
aʔkiʔraru	12.	akiʔraende	son.
	13.	ejngire	son (= little man).
	14.	nikiladdnere	son (used by the father's brother to the brother's son).
aʔkiʔneru	15.	ʔnkeninde	daughter.
	16.	decjngire	daughter (= little woman).
	17.	inkaniuddnere	daughter (adopted).
(t)oʔheru	18.	toaʔde	older sister.
	19.	kirdnde	older sister (?).
ariʔaderu	20.	(t)oaniuinʔkere	younger sister.
	21.	aiʔnde	brother or sister of opposite sex.
akeaʔheru	22.	(t)oyatide	older brother.
aiʔteru	23.	(t)akanaʔde	younger brother.
asiʔeru	24.	(t)etre, ndedte	(my) spouse, wife.
ogʔnaseru	25.	(t)uiraʔe	(my) spouse, husband.
	26.	etende	husband (equals man).
	27.	uirʔtere	husband (when he is absent, or the husband of another).
asikeru	28.	(t)arute	cross-cousin (masc.), sister's husband (m. s.).
aseʔtaru	29.	(ta)deʔtere	cross-cousin (fem.), brother's wife (w. s.).
aniaetru	30.	(t)usirare	sister's son, daughter's husband (m. s.).
	31.	(t)usiuiʔnde	brother's son, daughter's husband (w. s.).
	32.	(ta)uiʔnde	daughter's husband.
asʔutu	33.	uiʔdase 34. uikiade	brother's daughter (w. s.), sister's daughter (m. s.) son's wife.
asedteru	35.	ndukuʔnde	
	36.	(ta)kiʔnde	mother's father, father of spouse.
	37.	ʃodnde 38. (ta)ʃodnde	father of father or of the mother.

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alẽlhosu	39. hitirude	mother of spouse.
	40. tirũnde	mother of the father or of the mother.
asĩřtu	41. asĩřte	son (daughter) of the son (or daughter), sister of father (brother of mother) of father or of mother.
asuělis	42. asĩřarore	children of the son or of the daughter of the brother (w. s.), children of the son or of daughter of the sister (m. s.).

[31] Descriptive terms:

43. uẽlkuaĩnde 44. (ta)uiddnere	child of a third person, adopted child.
45. iodne	adolescent. (masc)
46. tilfne	adolescent. (fem.)

(For orphan, masculine or feminine, widower, widow, see above, p. 26.)

• • • •

We go now to the system of parentage of the northern group (dialect c):

1.	yẽnko	father.
2.	hĩrni	father's brother.
3.	nẽuko	mother, mother's sister.
4.	asiřtaha	father's sister.
5.	hodka	mother's brother, father of the spouse, father of the father or of the mother.
6.	ĩlřho	wife of the mother's brother, mother of the spouse, mother of the father or of the mother.
7.	taẽta	son, sister's son (w. s.), son of a "wife" (m. s.)
8.	taẽtero	daughter, sister's daughter (w. s.), daughter of a "wife" (m. s.).
9.	ayĩlsu	son or daughter of the sister (m. s.).
10.	tãtmero	son or daughter of the brother (w. s.).
11.	isĩa	older brother or sister.
12.	ialduĩ	younger brother or sister.
13.	iřtta	wife, daughter of the father's sister, daughter of the mother's sister.

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14. tiʔmo	husband, son of the father's sister, son of the mother's brother.
15. iatpa	sister's husband, wife's brother (m. s.).
16. tiuʔtta	brother's wife, husband's sister (w. s.).
17. tiauʔtte	daughter's husband, (f. p.), daughter's husband, "wife's" husband (m. s.).
18. tinaiʔso	brother's daughter (w. s.), sister's daughter (m. s.), when she is at the same time wife of the son (m. w. s.) or wife of the younger brother (m. s.).
19. tiiti	daughter's children.
20. hoetto	son's child, or of the daughter when the latter is married to an uncle.
21. nda	child (married to an uncle).

[97] [32] This vocabulary of relationships apparently does not offer any affinity linguistically with that of dialects a and b; and the structure of the system also seems different. Without doubt the fundamental principle—the marriage of cross-cousins—remains the same. To be convinced of this, it is sufficient to refer to the list of relatives designated by the terms tiimo and iatta. Again one finds the division of members of the same generation into sisters and wives (m. s.), or brothers and husbands (w. s.) on one side, and on the other, sisters and wives of brothers (w. s.), or brothers and husbands of sisters (m. s.). But the distinction here is more confused, since it is accompanied by an absence of symmetry concerning the designation of the brothers and sisters of parents, and the children of the brothers and sisters of the subject. Instead of finding the first divided into fathers and mothers, fathers-in-law and mothers-in-law, and the second into children, and sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, we have a more complicated terminology. The name of the father's sister (aiʔtaba) differs from that of the wife of the mother's brother (tiʔko), although they are habitually confused in a system of marriage among bilateral cross-cousins. There is also a special name for the father's brother. But, if this latter is a younger brother who has one of his nieces, he will be called brother-in-law (iatpa) by his brother's son, his nephew. Even more delicate is the naming of nephews and nieces because the symmetry carried on by the other systems between the children of brother (of a brother) and the children of sister (of a sister) fades out giving way to a new symmetry, this time between the children of sister (of a sister), and the children of the wife (classificatory) of the brother, who are called by the same name. Moreover, the children

601 184 born respectively from a brother and from a sister receive different names according to whether they are the sons or daughter of a brother (of a sister), or sons or daughter of a sister (of a brother). Finally, it is no longer normally possible to identify the son-in-law (ñagi'tte) and the daughter-in-law (ginañ'o) with the nephew or the niece (cross-), and the îluî, soeib (the same difference as the asgi'ttu, asgi'te, and asgeliss or asgiarore of the preceding systems) do not correspond exactly to relatives of the third generation, or to the third degree.

601 184 582 These contrasts are clarified when one studies the forms of marriage actually practiced. Of eight marriages, five are "horizontal," that is uniting a husband and wife coming from the same classificatory generation, and three are "oblique," the husband coming from the generation of his wife's mother:

C1 = c2 : brother's son and sister's daughter (horizontal);
C4 = c5 : husband's brother and wife's sister (horizontal);
C6 = c7 : mother's younger brother and sister's daughter (oblique);
C12 = c13 : mother's older brother and sister's daughter (oblique);
C16 = c17 : mother's younger brother and sister's daughter (oblique);
C20 = c8 : husband's sister and wife's older brother (horizontal);
C20 = c21 : husband's sister and wife's older brother (horizontal);
C29 = c28 : brother's son and sister's daughter (horizontal).

[33] In the absence of genealogical facts, one can even suppose that two of the marriages above, classed as "horizontal," are probably oblique, given the considerable difference in age between the husband and wife (C20 = c8, c21); such is often the case of children issued from "oblique" marriages. But even disregarding this possibility, the proportion of "oblique" relationships rises when one passes from marriages as such to the classificatory relationship of husband and wife. Thus C6, for example, calls "wife":

c2 : wife's sister;
c5 : sister of father's wife;
c7 : his own wife;
c8 : sister of father's wife;
c13: wife's sister;
c17: wife's sister;
c21: sister of father's wife;
c26: wife's sister;
c31: wife's sister;

there are actually three horizontal relationships and six oblique (directly or indirectly, through the already oblique position of the intermediary).

We have seen above that the "oblique" marriage is not unknown 601 ●
in the eastern, central, southern and western groups. But it is not so 582
frequent there, and above all, the system of names does not take ac- 184
count of it. The problems resulting from this form of marriage are, then, resolved in two ways: either they preserve the names which have become contradictory, or they displace one or several individuals from the category of kinship to another. The method of the northern system is entirely different, for this is the system whose structure is accommodated to marriage between persons of different generations. (1) This new character is snown by a clearer distinction, within each generation, between the "elder" and the "younger"; in place of four terms distinguishing the relative age and sex, there are only two, iẽia and sabẽni, which refer to age and apply indifferently to both sexes. Moreover, the term sabẽni tends to have the general meaning of "young" or "little," and succeeds in specifying, from this point of view, whatever the kinship relationship is (2) implying thus that the quality of sabẽni is equivalent to displacement to another generation. And actually, even though the older brother and the younger brother can equally claim to marry their sister's daughter, the older brother, even when married to his niece, will continue to be called iẽia by [34] his wife's mother. On the other hand, in the same situation the younger brother sometimes passes to the rank of siegĩtte; he is no longer considered as a brother, but as a son-in-law. Moreover, if the term îiaufĩtte normally means a "horizontal" son-in-law, that is a cross-nephew married to a daughter, it is significant that a man calls îiaufĩtte his younger brother, who has married a niece, and even a "wife"; and that a woman designates a younger brother married to a daughter in the same way, as has just been seen. Nevertheless, a man calls his cross-cousins (fem.) and his sisters' daughters indiscriminately iẽtta (wife), while distinguishing the husbands of his "wives" as îiaufĩtte (horizontal son-in-law), sabẽni (or îiaufĩtte, replacing sabẽni) and iẽia.

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1. For the theoretical interpretation, it will be compared with the Miwok and Ao Naga systems, as we have analyzed them in another work. (Les structures élémentaires de la parenté, ch. 17 and 22.)

2. Cf. below, p. 37, text No. 1.

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[illegible]
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It might be considered that these differences as regards the other systems are purely formal. They bring on, however, some important consequences. The preferential marriage between mother's brother and sister's daughter must introduce asymmetry between the children of the brother and those of the sister, thus justifying the use of different names in the two cases. For the same reason, one sees a shift of a classificatory generation appear between a woman who has married an uncle, and that of her parallel cousins. Here is a striking example:

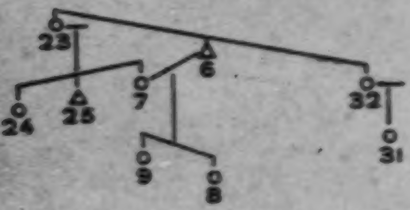

Fig. 10.

c23 calls C6 (in reality, sabâni) ŝjauîˈte; thus her daughter c24 calls him tji'mo (husband), since he is married to her sister, c7, and their brother C25 calls him jôpa for the same reason. For c23, her granddaughters (and nieces at the same time) c8 and c9 are ŝiuŝî, called taŝtero by the sister of the mother c24, and aiŝinu by the brother of the mother C25. But if one looks at it from the point of view of c31, the essential fact is not, as in the preceding cases, that C6 has married a daughter or a sister (here, a niece or a parallel cousin), but that he is the mother's brother. Consequently, she calls him koďka (father-in-law), and she calls the wife of C6 ŝji'ko (mother-in-law), and the children of the latter become her ŝjui'ta (sisters-in-law).

A double conclusion can be drawn from this analysis. In the first place, it must be remembered that in systems a and b the term for "older brother or sister" also means parallel cousins. Now we have just established that in the system of group c the parallel cousin can actually be displaced to a younger generation, and that such is the case when the marriage is of the "oblique" type. It may, therefore, be that the oblique marriage has occupied a more important place in systems a and b than is the case today. The second point is that the kinship system of group b, with its use of a special term for the brother or sister of the opposite sex, and its distinction [35] between the parents of spouses and the grandparents, takes an intermediary position

601 582 184 between systems a and c. It constitutes a sort of transition between the simple, symmetrical and harmonious system of the eastern groups and the more subtle and complex structure of the northern system. This role corresponds well to the respective geographic positions occupied by the different groups.

CONCRETE STUDY OF THE GROUPS

601 The concrete functioning of the kinship systems previously analyzed has been studied in the following groups:

I. Eastern group (dialects a).

621 (1) Dialect a 1. —A group of 23 individuals composed of six men, nine women, and eight children. This group was found to be temporarily enlarged by the meeting, and sometimes even the temporary combining of bands, whose members present among themselves, and as concerns the first group, analogous kinship relationships. Thus, group (1) was found to be temporarily increased to the point of including 75 individuals (20 men, 30 women, and 25 children).

(2) Dialect a2. —Several small units each including 6 to 12 individuals.

II. South-central group (dialect b1).

A stable group of 17 individuals composed of five men, six women and six children, temporarily increased, by the meeting with relatives, to 31 individuals (13 men, 10 women, and 8 children).

III. Western group (dialect b2).

A group of 12 individuals composed of four men, five women, and three children.

IV. Northern group (dialect c).

A stable group of 34 individuals composed of 9 men, 11 women and 14 children.

128 114 The concrete study of the groups will be based on the eastern group a1 (restricted) and on the central group b1 (restricted), the only ones with whom we have lived long enough to set forth a psycho-sociological analysis.

55l names of the adults without too much difficulty. When the latter
12 found out our secret meetings, the children were harshly reprimanded, and the source of our information cut off. However, during a moment of great confidence one day, A1 gave us the names of her parents and great-grandparents, so that at the end of the account the list of proper names covers a total of five generations:

55l 1. Mother of the mother of A1 .... Arigsiladusu.
● 60l 2. Father of the father of A1 .... Itritilisu, Irigudusu.
3. Mother of the father of A1 .... Etuadiglugluau.
4. Father of the mother of A1 .... Iglurkulusu.
5. Father of A1 .... Arakidladusu.
6. Mother of A1 .... Tuyuatrusu.
7. A1 .... (missing)
8. a2 .... Gyenderesu.
9. a3 .... Uaiterekaneru.
10. a4 .... Uaatrakaneru.
11. Mother of a4 .... Uaatrasu.
12. Father of a4 .... Ninganirusu.
13. a5 .... Guenderekineru.
[39] 14. A6 .... Tajiritsu.
15. a7 .... Naritsu, Nianiajkinere.
16. a8 .... Tajirikineru.
17. a9 .... Tajirikineru.
18. A10 .... Nirkloerekinedetu.
19. a11 .... Selliqitirokatsu.
20. a12 .... Selliʔitikineru.
21. A13 .... Tareetakaresu.
22. a14 .... Njohelese.
23. A15 .... Nikatkitasu.
24. A16 .... Njoselesekiraru.
25. A17 .... Kajakaresu.
26. a18 .... Sonatsakaresu.
27. a19 .... Sonatsakaneru.
28. a20 .... Sonatsakarikiritasu,
Kjatorekineru.
29. A21 .... Karloleru.
30. a22 .... Itatãnjẽdetu,
Idonerekineru.
31. a23 .... Kjedikitasu,
Kyetitõdesukineru,
Karlokineru.

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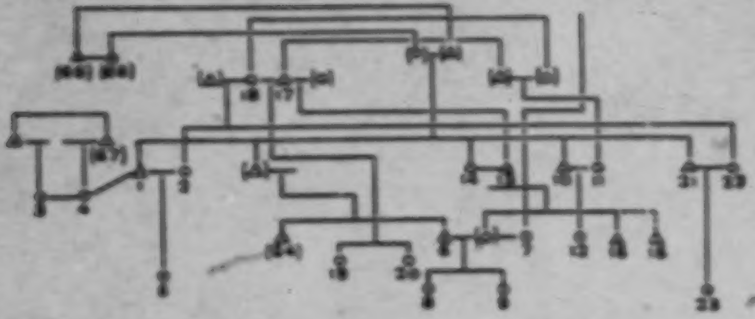

Fig. 11.
Genealogical composition of group a1.

622 115 157 A1.--The chief of the group. He is a man of about 35 years, married to three women: a2, by whom he has a daughter a5, and a3 and a4, both daughters of "sister," without child.

A1 is remarkably intelligent, conscious of his responsibilities, active, enterprising and ingenious. When we went to visit his village, he did not hesitate to follow a new itinerary, unknown to him, because our horses could not pass along the habitual path. And when we arrived at the village, we found the stakes necessary to tie our oxen and horses, which he had had set up by a party sent a few hours ahead of time.

His attitude concerning writing is very revealing. He immediately understood his role of signing (1), and the social superiority which it

531 212 1. The Nambikwara of group a are completely ignorant of drawing, if one excepts a few geometric tracings on gourds. For several days they did not know what to do with the paper and pencils which we distributed to them. A little later, we saw them deeply engrossed in tracing wavy lines. In doing this they were imitating the only use which they had seen us make of our note pads, that is, for writing, but without understanding the purpose and significance.

We shall
62 comment later (1) on the complex motives that might have induced

1. Cf. p. 77.

[47] these two bands, speaking different dialects and who were not even capable of understanding one another without an interpreter, to practically merge. It seems that group bl was composed of the rare survivors of a formerly important formation now disappeared, living previously in two distinct groups, around the sources of the eastern tributaries of the Roosevelt River. We have already tried to calculate these losses, resulting from recent epidemics (2). Group c had,

2. Cf. above, p. 6.

without doubt, gone through the same hardships. Moreover, its
[579] position had been compromised by antagonisms with other bands rising from the same dialect, and who had formerly been their allies. A visit, with a commercial goal, of related Indians originally from the south (members of the group known by the name of Kabini) must have raised the forces of group bl to 31 persons for
621 several days. Here is its composition at this moment:
115
Fire 1 (1 to 7). --The family of the chief of the band. The
157
chief, B1, is 30 to 35 years old, and one of the most intelligent
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● 601 Indians whom it was our privilege to encounter. But he is intelligent in a way very different from A1. The latter is prudent and very resourceful, always meditating some political combination. On the contrary, B1 is not a man of action, but rather contemplative, with a charming and poetic spirit, and rich sensibilities. He is fully conscious of the inevitable decadence of his people, and this conviction often shades his words with a subtle tint of melancholy:

(4) joãmditnʔẽ ajãnajne heni niho ãndedniẽn. (bl)

"I also did the same thing, now it is finished," [51] he says, remembering happier days when his group, far from being reduced to a handful of individuals incapable of keeping alive their traditional customs, was comprised of several hundreds of participants faithful to all the manifestations of the Nambikwara culture. His curiosity toward our customs and towards those which we had been able to observe in other tribes is just as great as ours. With him, ethnographic work is never unilateral. He conceives of it only as an exchange of information, and what we bring him is always very welcome. Often
[17] he even asks us for—and preserves carefully—drawings representing

621 feather ornaments, hair styles, arms, such as we have seen among
115 neighboring or faraway peoples. Did he entertain the hope of per-
157 fecting the material and intellectual equipment of his group thanks
622 to this information? It is possible, even though his dreamy tempera-
177 ment hardly ever drives him to realizations. However, one day when
601 we were interrogating him concerning the Pan pipes, to verify the area of diffusion of that instrument, he answered that he had never [53] seen any, but that he would like to have a drawing (different from group *a*, group *b* does not have real pipes of Pan, but instruments made of two or three tubes of equal length and giving approximately the same note, tied together with cotton thread and wax). With the aid of our sketch he succeeded in making a crude but usable instrument.

621
601 *B1* had two wives: *b2*, about 25 years, mother of two little girls of 5 to 7 years, *b4* and *b5*; and *b3*, older than he (about 40 years old), mother of a boy of 7 years, *B6*, and of a girl of 9 years, *b7*.

Fire 2 (*8* and *9*). --A son of a deceased brother of *B1*, whom the latter then calls "son" (about 25 years old), and his wife about 18, sister of *B13*; no information about the father and mother.

Fire 3 (*10* to *12*). --*B10* is a brother of *B8*, and *B1* calls him "son" also. His wife, *b11*, of undetermined parentage, is about 20 years old, and his daughter *b12* about 6.

Fire 4 (*13* and *14*). --This household presents the only sure case of oblique marriage in group *b1*. *B13*, about 25 years, married a girl of 16 or 17, *b14*, daughter of a dead son of the dead brother of *B1*; he calls her then, as seen before, *tasuite*.

Fire 5 (*15* to *17*). --These three individuals are the last survivors of a related group destroyed by an epidemic. After the disaster, they joined the band of *B1*. *B15*, about 35 years, is the brother of *b2*, thus *tasuite* of *B1*. His wife, the same age, *b16*, is a sister of *B1*, thus *ndedere* of *b2*. Their son, *B17*, is about 5. The daughters of *B1* call him (*B17*) "husband," and he calls them "wives."

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601 [52] *The visitors*. --They came from the region lying between the sources of the tributaries of the left bank of the Juruena and of those of the right bank of the Guaporé. All were related to their hosts, and were distributed among three generations. The oldest was comprised of three individuals: *B18*, about 50 years old, father of *B21*, *B25*, *B27*, and *B29*; his wife *b19*, the same age, paternal aunt of *B1*; and the brother of the wife, *B20*, 40 years. Besides the children of *B18* already mentioned (from 20 to 30 years old), the next

621 generation is composed of b26, wife of B25 (about 20 years); of the
579 husband of b29, B28 (about 25); of the wife, b22, of B21 (same age);
601 of his brother B24 (20 years), both children of a deceased sister of
B18; and of a widower of about 40 years, B30, brother of B15 and of
B2, who had been married to a sister of B1. The young generation
is represented by only two children, b23, about 7 years, daughter
of B21 and b22, and b31, about 10 years, daughter of B30, mother dead.
For the whole picture of genealogical relationships, the reader should
refer to Figure 15.

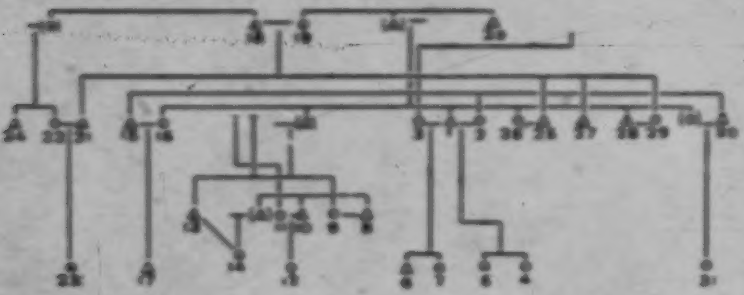

Fig. 15.

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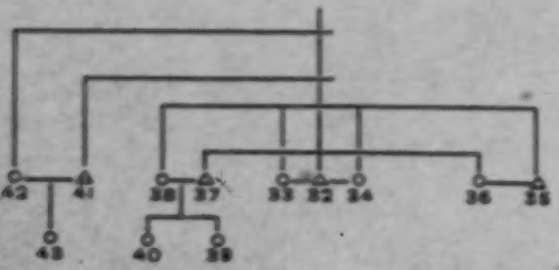

Fig. 16.

621 [53] Western group, dialect b2: tajate, lahõnde (b1/2):
601 [illegible] (c).

We shall limit ourselves to giving the genealogical scheme of the composition of this little group (Figure 16), found, only for several days, toward the line of the division of the waters which separate the basins of the Roosevelt and the Gi-Paraná (Tres Buritis). Its members seem to be the survivors of a formerly important group, the tajite.

Northern group, dialect c: sabãne (c): tamaĩnde (b1/2): tofteru (a 1/2).

[NT] We have not been able to establish the genealogical composition of this group for reasons of linguistic difficulties (dialect c does not seem to spring from the same family as the others) and because of the consecutive impossibilities which we encountered in determining the true position in the system of individuals designated by the same term. We shall thus content ourselves with an analysis by households.

Fire 1 (1 to 3). --C1, about 30 years, and his wife c2, 25 years; he, "brother" of C6, she, "daughter" of c23; their son, C3, is about 10 years old.

Fire 2 (4 and 5). --C4, 40 years, is the younger brother of C20 and of c23; his wife c5, 25 to 30 years, is called "wife" by C6, "older sister" by c21, and "daughter" by c23.

Fire 3 (6 to 10). --We have already analyzed (1) the kinship situation of C6, of his wife c7 (both are 30), and of their children c8 and c9 (6 to 8 years); the younger brother of the wife, C10, about 10 years, lives with them.

Fire 4 (11 to 14). --C11 is 50 odd years old; he is called "elder brother" by C6, C4, C15, C20, and c23; his wife c12, about 35 years, is "daughter" of c23; the young brother of the latter, C14, about 17 years, unmarried, lives with them as well as their daughter of 7 years, c13.

Fire 5 (15 to 18). --C15, about 30 years, is called "younger brother" by C20 and c23; his wife c16 is "daughter" of c23; she has a young brother C17, about 12 years, and a baby of some 20 months, c18.

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1. Pp. 33 to 35.

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[754] Fire 6 (19 to 22). --The chief, or rather, it seems, the shaman of group c, is 30 to 40 years old, "brother" of c23. His dispositions are friendly and mysterious. We shall encounter him farther on (2). He has two wives, c19 and [54] c21, very pretty girls of 17 or 18 years, "sisters" of the dead husband of c23. Here we have, then, a good example of sororal polygyny. The second woman has a little boy of 3 years, C22.

Fire 7 (23 to 25). --The woman, c23, is over 40; she is a widow and seems to enjoy great consideration. Her numerous "brothers" provide for her as well as her children, and like C20, she is apt to receive supernatural revelations (1). She has a son, C25, about 14 years old, and a daughter, c24, about 10. Concerning them, refer to page 34.

Fire 8 (26 and 27). --A young couple of about 18, whose parents must be dead and whom the elders of the group call "grandchildren."

Fire 9 (28 to 30). --C28, about 25 years, is a "son" of C6; his wife, c29 is older than he (over 40); she is called "daughter" by c19 and c21, although they are by far younger than she; her daughter c30 is about 2 years old.

Fire 10 (31 to 33). --c32, about 40 years old, is a younger sister of c23; she has two daughters: the eldest, c31, about 17, is married; the younger, c33, still a baby. The husband and her son-in-law are absent; they are said to be on a trip together. The group sees to the needs of the two women.

It is suitable to add a visitor to this list, C34, about 30 years old. [574] He is the brother of c12 and, during his stay, he receives the hospitality of household number 4.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS

Husbands and Wives

593 To understand well the attitude of the two sexes as concerns one another, it is indispensable to keep in mind the fundamental character

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2. P. 103.

1. Cf. p. 101.

462 [58] like the women, but from the shoulder (*adigiarhitim*, *al*), and frequently lightening the load by dragging the strap in the left hand, which they explain by saying that they need to watch out for possible game. And they naturally do not neglect collecting and gleaning whenever the occasion is presented or necessity is felt. In like manner, the women normally aid their husbands (especially the polygamous wives) in their work in the gardens. Both sexes cut down wood, the men for constructing huts or shelters and for making bows, arrows, spears and clubs, etc., and the women, more often, for the fire wood. Above all, and when she is not occupied by her own work, the woman aids her husband in all the tasks that are his. She holds his implements, gives them to him when he asks for them, supports the end of the arrow or the wood of the bow while he repairs or polishes them, or begins to twist the cord while he finishes the wooden part. She does the retouching and finishes the work. This frequent and always harmonious collaboration gives the impression that the sexual division of labor is much less strict among the Nambikwara than it is commonly, and sometimes one might even think it non-existent. This is not so; but the rule is constantly made flexible or masked by the unity of the couple.

601
602 As we have shown in studying the kinship system all the classificatory contemporaries of an individual belonging to a different sex are divided by him into husbands and wives, and brothers and sisters. We have found no term which designates the actual spouse, and allows one to distinguish him in conversation from the classifying spouse. A man calls his wife or wives, and his cross-cousins (fem.) indiscriminately *asjeru*, as the woman designates her husband and her cross-cousins (masc.) by the same term *oyenaesu*. But, of course, behavior is very different in the two cases. It has just been seen to what extent relationships are close and active between true husband and wife. As regards his potential wives, a man does not adopt any particular attitude, and the relationships do not seem to be either [59] [Table: Sexual Division of Labor] more or less intimate than those which he carries on with his sisters (the same remark is true as regards the relationship of a woman with her potential husbands and her brothers). In these two cases, the relationships are characterized by [60] great reserve, the individuals involved do not pay much attention to one another and rarely address one another except for definite reasons. But it is a question here of a mass attitude, conditioned by usage, rather than of an over-all picture of conscious and stylized reactions. The Indians do not seem to perceive

[Text continues on p. 67]

601 The Indians do not seem to perceive
602 the specific nature of certain inter-individual relationships except in
[illegible] the case of relationships of stepmother and stepfather, as will be seen farther on. Nevertheless, the very great liberty which reigns between a man and his wife on one hand, and his brothers-in-law on the other, contrasts greatly with the more serious and dull character of his dealings with his sisters or his (theoretical) wives. This reserve goes to the point of forbidding the verbal expression of the relationship of potential spouses among the children to a certain degree. In the
[24] course of our interrogations, we have always found it difficult to obtain an answer from the interested parties themselves or from their close relatives when the relationship was that of husband and wife (1).

1. The Indian questioned answers that he "does not know" or changes the subject of conversation.

However, there was no case where the exact answer was not given after several evasive words, or an affectation of ignorance, or an attitude of ill will. But however slight the prohibition (the exact information seems to be considered rather as an impropritey or an
[859] indelicacy), it is no less odd because of it, since children classed as potential spouses behave often, and very openly, as such, without anyone objecting to it.

595 Several times we have alluded to polygamy, concrete examples
462 of which were analyzed on the occasion of the study of the kinship systems. Among the Nambikwara, polygamy represents a general tendency limited by the quantity of available women, and a prerogative existing among the chiefs of the groups, the shamans, or outstanding personalities. From this point of view, it springs from the study of command, and we shall return to this when this problem is tackled. Whenever it exists, polygamy is not a substitute for monogamous marriage, it is added to it without suppressing it. An individual begins by marrying one single woman, and upon the occasion of his social advancement, or of happy occasions, it is suitable for him to add some companions. But a very clear distinction, even though it is not sanctioned by the vocabulary of kinship (2), is

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2. To characterize the functions of the first wife, an informant (A6) once used the term asjesu aqoyerelisu (a1); to designate the supplementary wives, another informant (B1) mentioned a form nukanajtere, which could be a feminine of nukenajore (b1), "companion," a term which the chief uses to designate the men of his group. But the

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601 sense of this term remains doubtful. And it has never been possible, in the course of the questions on kinship, to obtain from polygamous husbands discriminating terms for each of their wives.

595 established between the first wife and the new arrivals. The first
562 wife takes care of her children and devotes herself to the cares of
[252 the household, shredding the manioc and cooking the cumaru nuts.
262] She is occupied with feminine craft tasks. In short, she carries on her activities within the [61] limits of the sexual division of labor. The other wives aid her occasionally, but their main duty seems to be to assist their husband in his masculine tasks. They are comrades and collaborators who, in the general plan of the division of labor, could be more justifiably classed with the men. Their aid seems like a method on the part of the chief of the group to fulfill his heavy duties more easily, and like a psychological compensation for his responsibilities. When he leaves on a hunting or reconnoitering expedition, one of his polygamous wives accompanies him to hold his arrows and to carry in her basket the eventual prize. When he works around the camp or in the village, it is with their aid and com-
[515] pany. Although men and women do not bathe at the same time, one sometimes sees the husband and his polygamous wives take a bath together, the pretext for great struggles in the water, and innumerable
[832 jokes. In the evening he plays with them, either amorously, rolling
524] in the sand embracing two, three or four, or in a childlike way. For example A1, a3 and a4, stretched out on their backs, by way of making a star with three points on the ground, raise their feet in the air and knock them against one another, bottom of foot against bottom of foot, in a regular rythm (this game is described by the term eridnaŋkititu, al).

595 The polygamous union is thus presented as a super-imposition
182 of a plural form of amorous companionship on the monogamous marriage, and at the same time, we insist, as an attribute of command with a functional value from the psychological point of view as well as from the economic. The women usually live on very good terms, and although the first wife has a role that might seem a little unappreciated, working while she hears at her side the bursts of laughter of her husband and of his little mistresses, and sometimes even witnesses more tender frolicking, she does not show either bitterness or jealousy. In fact, this distribution of roles is not either unchangeable or rigorous, and, upon occasion, although rarely, the

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863 8. yʔrisekihĩ'adage numĩ' seistajene ẽlamnihĩ'ge(b1)
The child has urinated! the hide! he is dirty! throw out(the urine)!

Later, when the child can isolate himself but not yet clean himself up, he is seen returning on all fours to his mother and remaining in that position while she applies the small twig in the way that has been previously described.

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856 All children seem to have a pigmented blotch at birth to which no particular belief is attached. The informants only mention the phenomenon with that positive and detached attitude so striking on their part:

9. yʔtne ĵẽdeĵedẽdnege tõodayige ka ka ka gadẽrige (b1)
the children marked with green are born, one day, one day, one day, it disappears.

The disappearance of the blotch actually seems to be very rapid.

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609 One should, naturally, distinguish true parentage and classificatory parentage. The child does not adopt any particular form of conduct towards his "fathers" and "mothers" in the classificatory sense of the word. He treats them like other adults of the group. Often, furthermore, an individual calls a boy or girl much younger than himself father or mother (thus a19 and a20 are "mothers" of A6 and A24). [597] When an orphan is taken in by a parallel uncle or aunt, the classificatory parents take the place of true parents, and consequently the ● [601] conduct changes. In general, the Indians do not use [67] a term to distinguish classificatory parents and children from blood ones. When seeking precision, they add the word tayẽttu (a1), tayẽtte (b1): "my little one," to the term for son or daughter (aʔkiraru, aʔkineru), whose connotation seems thus to be social first of all. The physiological acceptance of this springs from the fact that the word is also used to designate the young of animals, other terms being reserved for relationships of parentage in the human family.

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157 The Nambikwara feel very real affection for their children, and show it as regards them, and they are repaid in turn. But these sentiments, however real and profound they may be, are often masked behind the nervousness and instability so characteristic of indigenous conduct. Also, as the following example will show, the risk is to let oneself be fooled by apparent indifference, and even momentary rudeness.

Little A16 suffers from indigestion; he has a headache, vomits, passes half the time groaning and the other half sleeping. He is ill, (intikãtu, a1), but no one, parents included, pays the least attention,

621 instead that _all_ the Sabané men were for them _tarúte_, or that _all_
605 the Tarundé men were _jópa._ As a general rule they did not
take the trouble to formulate relationships between women, between children, or between adults and children. In all these cases, except several occasions when the deduction was specifically made, they gave as an answer the name of the group: it is called "Sabané" or "Tarundé." It is thus in the function of the relationship of _tarúte_ or _jópa_ (_asúkosu_, _al_) that the system has been conceived and applied.

This fact merits attention, for if the goal of the system were only to assure intermarriages, one could proceed in two other ways, or, more exactly, give two other interpretations for the same solution; one consisting of posing all the women as "sisters-in-law," the other treating all the men of one group and all the women of the other, respectively, as being among themselves "brothers and sisters," and the result would have been the same. Of course, these two aspects are implied in the proposed solution, as its correlaries. However, the solution itself, which could be presented in three different and equivalent ways, has actually been thought, in preferential fashion, to be in the function of the relationship existing between the male and allied collaterals. Several suggestions should thus be examined.

601 [79] Of the three possible solutions, two implied taking the
women into consideration, one only was purely masculine, and
it is that one which has been chosen. One must not be astonished
if, as we suppose, the problem posed was a political problem,
thus arising from command, exclusively exercised by the men,
and not by a normal play of filiation, which seems rather a
[582] matter of female lineage (1). Although in a simple system of
marriage between cross-cousins, as is the Nambikwara system,
the "brothers-in-law among themselves" can be as easily the
fathers of the mothers as the fathers of the fathers, this choice
gives to the Nambikwara sociology, which to the present time
we have had trouble characterizing from this point of view, a
decidedly masculine tint, or rather, it bears witness of a
tendency in that direction, at the same time that it constitutes
the first outline of a social system coming to superimpose itself
on the purely family structures to which we have been limited

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1. See p. 39.

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601 up to the present time. We do not pretend to found a dualistic theory of organization (2) on these limited observations whose character remains anecdotal. However, we are indeed in the presence of one of those cases where "the fundamental traits of the clan organization are found, in a certain measure, to be preformed in tribes destitute of clan (3)." It would suffice, to satisfy the exigencies of dualistic organization, that the new group should settle down, and maintain the memory of its ambiguous origin by continuing to avoid confusing the two sets of fires.

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[562] Finally, this system manifests, under a new aspect, this preponderance of men which we have called attention to as regards inter-individual relationships. It is through the men that alliances of groups are decided, as also eventually, their wars.

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000 The preceding remarks have perhaps another interest: that of suggesting an interpretation of observations of a sociological character which one finds scattered in the ancient literature relating to South America.

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171 One should first note some striking analogies between certain traits of the Nambikwara kinship system and those which can be attributed to the family organization of the ancient Tupi of the Brazilian shore. It will be seen later that, on the metaphysical plan, there are not only themes common to the two cultures, but that such religious terms of the Nambikwara vocabulary have an evident Tupi origin. Each time that we are to describe the small incidents of the daily life of the Nambikwara, the temptation is almost irresistible [80] to quote Jean de Léry and Yves d'Evreux, for it is so true that the same words of these old authors can literally be applied to one culture, later by four centuries. But it is in the kinship system that the resemblances are the clearest: the two cultures invoke

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2. This point has been developed before; cf. "Dual organization etc.," loc. cit.

3. R. H. Lowie, "Family and Sib," American Anthropologist, N.S., Vol. 21, 1919, pp. 28-40.

60 the three same fundamental principles: distinction of the brothers [7] and sisters of the parents into parallel uncles and aunts called "fathers" and "mothers," and cross-uncles and aunts called "fathers-in-law" and "mothers-in-law"; preferential marriage between cross-cousins, with the concomitant assimilation of parallel cousins to "brothers" and "sisters"; finally avuncular marriage, which seems to have been the rule among the ancient Tupi, in the form of a preferential union between the mother's brother and the sister's daughter. (1)

1. There should be added the distinction of brothers and sisters into "elder" and "younger."

The first principle springs directly—and the other two indirectly—from an important text of Anchieta which we shall quote here:

"But in speaking of relationships they never use this word etê (true) because since they call the brothers of their fathers 'father,' and the sons of their brothers 'son,' and the sons of the uncles, brothers of the fathers, 'brother,' in order to declare who is their true father or son, they say xeruba xemonhangara, 'my father 'who begot me' and in the case of the son, xeraira xeremimonhanga, my son 'whom I begot'; and thus never did I hear the Indian call his wife xeremireco etê, but rather simply xeremireco or xeraicig, 'mother of my children'; nor did I ever hear a woman call her husband xemenete, 'true husband,' but rather simply xemena or xemembira ruba, 'father of my children'; which terms they use for men with whom they are living as well as for their recognized husbands; and if the husband ever calls one of his wives xeremireco etê, he means 'my most esteemed or dearest wife,' who often is the last one he has taken." (2)

2. "Informação dos Casamentos dos Indios do Brasil," Revista Trimensal del Instituto Historico e Geographico Brasileiro, Vol. VIII, 1846, I (2nd Series), pp. 254-262; p. 259.

This text offers a supplementary interest. It shows that the Tupi, like the Nambikwara, were not stopped by the problem of the distinction between real parents and classificatory parents. In the two cases, the need of special terms was not felt, and one is limited to referring, when necessary, to physiological considerations. (3)

4. Cf. before, p   .[sic]

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601 The reader will find other indications concerning the assimilation of
7 the brother of the father to a classificatory father in Soares de Souza (4).

4. "Roteiro do Brasil," Revista do Instituto, etc., Vol. XIV, 1851, p. 316-317.

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601 The old authors often describe the marriage of cross-cousins
592 among the Tupi, as well as that of uncle with niece. Here again
7 we shall first refer to Anchieta:

"They do not call daughters of sisters temerico etê, nor are they considered as such; because many Indians, since they have several nieces—and very attractive women they are—do not make use of them; but since brothers have so much power over sisters, they consider that [81] nieces belong to them (the brothers), so that they may consider them as wives and use them ad libitum if they so desire, just as they give their sisters themselves to some men and take them away from others. Taragoaj, a very important Indian of the village of Jaribiatiba, which is in the area of São Vicente, had two wives, and one of them was his niece, daughter of his sister..."(1)

1. Loc. cit., p. 259.

Farther on, the two types of marriage are seen as symmetrical institutions: "...porque os pais lhes dão as filas e os irmãos as irmas." Staden also alludes to the marriage of cousins: "They also offer as a gift their daughters and their sisters." (2) The same type of thing is

2. Hans Staden. The true history of his captivity (ed. Malcolm Letts), London, Vol. II, Ch. 18, p. 146.

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842 found in Soares de Souza, Claude d'Abbeville and many others. With a sharp sociological sense, Anchieta discovers a connection between the marriage with the sister's daughter and the recognition of the man as alone responsible for conception. One remembers that this theory is also shared by the Nambikwara:

"Since they respect the daughters of brothers, they call them daughters, and consider them as such; and thus they consider them inviolate because they have a true relationship, coming from the
842 father, who is the agent; and the mothers are nothing more than

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60 receptacles with respect to the fathers, receptacles in which children
[7] are deposited, and for this reason the sons of fathers, if they are born
[81] of slaves or captives taken from another tribe, are always free and
592 just as esteemed as the others; and the sons of women, if these sons are begotten by captives, are considered slaves and are sold, and sometimes they kill and eat them, even though they may be their own grandchildren, sons of their daughters, and for this reason also they use the daughters of sisters with no prejudice at intercourse, but there is no obligation or universal custom to consider them as true wives, more than the others, as has been stated above. And for this reason the fathers marry them now to their uncles, brothers of the mothers, if the parties are agreeable, by virtue of the power which they have to deal with them as they wish, something which until now is not done with nephews, sons of brothers, nor even in other relationships which are more distant and which come through the line of the fathers, because among the Indians this is considered very strange." (3)

Without doubt the marriage of cross-cousins is widespread throughout the whole of South America. (4) But among the Tupi it was rather avuncular marriage which held the attention of the first travelers. Thus, Léry notes: "As for the uncle, he takes his niece" (as a wife); and Thevet: "From the time they are born, the maternal uncle raises them and retains them for future wives." (5) Magalhães de Gandavo expresses himself inexactly, without doubt, but [82] in

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3. *Loc. cit.*, p. 259-260.

4. Thus Breton, concerning the Caraib of the Antilles says: "First cousins whom we call sons of the brothers of the father are called brothers and these brothers of the father are also called fathers; and the children of these brothers do not contract alliances together, but rather with the children of the sisters of their fathers." (Dictionnaire Caraïbe-François, Auxerre, 1665, p. 11.)

5. Léry, loc. cit, II, Ch. XVII, p. 85; Thevet, Cosmogonie universelle, p. 932.

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the same sense when he writes: "It is their custom to marry the women who are their nieces, daughters of their brothers of their sisters; they regard them as their true and legitimate wives. The fathers of these women cannot refuse them, and no one, except their uncle, can claim to marry them (1)." One can refer also to

1. Pedro de Magalhes de Gandavo, The Histories of Brazil, The Cortes Society, New York, 1922, II, ch. X, p. 89.

Nobrega, Vasconcellos, Soares de Souza (2).

2. Nobrega, Cartas do Brazil, 1549-1560, Rio de Janeiro, 1931, p. 148;--Vasconcellos, Chronica da Companhia de Jesu do Estado do Brasil, Lisboa, 1865, I, LXXXII, p. 133; Soares de Souza, Tratado, CLVII, CLII.

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As regards polygamy and the distinction, so clear among the Nambikwara, between the first wife devoted to household tasks and the secondary wives, companions of the men and sharing their obligations, it will be remembered that Magalhães de Gandavo alludes to a category of women actually unmarried, but who take part in masculine activity (3).

3. Gandavo, loc. cit., II, Ch. 10, p. 89. One will find other information about the family organization of the ancient Tupi in: A. Métraux, La religion des Tupinamba (Paris, Leroux, 1928), passim; —Lafone Quevedo, "Guarani kinship terms as an index of social organization (American Anthropologist, Vol. 21, 1919), p. 421-440; —P. Kirchhoff, "Die Verwandtschaftorganisation der Urwaldstämme Südamerikas (Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Vol. 63, 1931, Ch. 15, p. 182).

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All of these observations authorize us to trace a parallel between the extension of the relationship of "brother-in-law" among the Nambikwara, and a custom, seemingly very close, of the ancient Tupi. First we quote from Yves d'Evreux: "A party of Frenchmen was dispersed throughout the villages to live there according to the

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607 while (besides the preceding form) the Nambikwara brothers-in-law
171 exchange payment directly in the form of homosexual relationships,
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[538] which make up for the absence of an available sister.

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We may now draw a conclusion. The ancient Tupi were acquainted with two types of preferential marriage: the marriage of cross-cousins, and avuncular marriage. The first appeared normally in the form of an exchange of sisters between two cross-cousins; the second resulted from a privilege over the daughter of the sister exercised by the mother's brother, or conceded to the latter by the sister's husband. In the two cases, the marriage is based on a pact between cross-cousins, brothers-in-law in right or in fact—which is the definition which we have retained for the Nambikwara terms tarúte or jópa. Moreover, this relationship of "brother-in-law" can be established under the name of chetouasap (Yves d'Evreux) or cotonasap (Léry) between individuals which no bond of kinship united before, or relatives of a different or more distant type, and even between strangers (as was the case between French and Indians). The goal was to make possible intermarriage and to amalgamate families or groups, until that time heterogeneous, into a new social unit. One recognizes the procedure which we have described in connection with the fusion of the Sabané and Tarundé (1) groups.

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1. The South American practice of utilizing kinship relationships to translate and establish social ties is attested by Von den Steinen (Unter der Naturvölkern Zentral Brasiliens, 2 Aufl. Berlin, 1897, p. 286), whom the Bakairi had decided to call "older brother" and the Mehinaku "maternal uncle." We have just established the equality of the terms "brother-in-law" and "maternal uncle" in a system of marriage between cousins (cross-) joined to the avuncular marriage. As to the use of the term "elder brother," this calls for two observations. In the first place, the kinship system of the Bororo, who are not far distant from the Xingu, modifies each generation in two stages of which the one (elder) is assimilated to the younger members of the former generation and the other (younger) to the older members of the next generation. In such a system, an "elder brother" might be, in fact, a real uncle and a potential brother-in-law. The second point brings to a focus the logical difference between

171 601 two types of solidarity, the one, mechanical and expressed by the term brother, and the other, organic, expressed by the term brother-in-law. We have alluded to this above, p. 71.

114 601 One might object that the old authors might have interpreted doubtful observations in the light of European facts. As we shall propose [84] the name of *competage* to designate an institution which we believe to be authentically Indian, it will be useful to stop for a moment at this aspect of the problem.

Without doubt the facts analyzed above, and the European institution of *competage* [compaternity]offer striking analogies. At the beginning, the godfather and the godmother were connected with one another, and both of them to the parents of the child, by the mystic bonds of sponsorship. But the relationship soon became secularized in all the small rural communities, or, more exactly, everywhere where the family grouping takes precedence over the extended social group. The relationship is then employed to establish an artificial kinship line, or even, as happens among the Nambikwara to translate in kinship terms a simple phenomenon of spatial contiguity. (1) The strangers, the newcomers, are adopted thanks to the reciprocal usage of the appellations of godfather and godmother which they receive from—and return to—their contemporaries. On the other hand, the stranger usually assimilates himself by taking a wife in his new community, and the terms godfather and brother-in-law become synonyms so rapidly that the men allied by marriage only call one another by the first. In the villages of Mediterranean Europe and of Latin America, the godfather or "compadre" is an actual or potential brother-in-law. That in certain regions of Central or South America the analogy between the Indian and European institutions has aided the first to establish and modernize itself is not doubtful. Thus, in Mexico, the primitive institution of the *moste*, that is, obligation, for the heads of families to exchange presents periodically now functions in the framework of the relations of "compadres," the Spanish term offering a convenient translation of the ancient Otomi. (2)

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1. This derivation is well brought to light by etymology: in English, god-sib becomes gossip.

2. Jacques Soustelle, *La famille Otomi-Pame du Mexique central*, Paris, Institut D'Ethnologie, 1937.

114 But the formal analogy of the two institutions should not disguise
601 their truly opposite characters. In the Latin-Mediterranean society
the bond, formerly mystic and now social, of compeтage, can be
transformed by marriage into an actual kinship line. Among the
[17] ancient Tupi, and among the Nambikwara, it is, on the contrary,
the concrete kinship which furnished its model to a type of bond
utilized to establish wider relationships.

That having been posed, there are two reasons why our authors could not have elaborated a pseudo-Indian institution after a European model. In the first place, men as familiar with religious problems as were Yves d'Evreux, Cardim and Léry, could not have likened a relationship whose first consequence, and the probable object, was to permit new types of marriage, to the relationship between godfather, godmother and relatives who observed very severe enforcement [85] of the prohibitions of marriage, especially since the thirteenth century. At the time when they were writing, the question had actuality, since it was set down in the program of the Council of Trent, where the ancient rules had to be a little softened. But we have a more decisive argument. From the arrival of the first missionaries, the two institutions, European and Indian, must have evolved side by side, especially among the baptized Indians. But neither they nor their European priests ever interpreted Christian sponsorship in terms of Indian compaternity. On the contrary, and more logically since the newly introduced institution carried restrictions regarding marriage, they treated it as a modality of the relationship of paternity. They likened the godfather to a classificatory father: "Thus, they (the children who come to receive baptism) regarded their godfathers as their real fathers and called them Cherou, meaning "my father," the French called them Cheaire, which means "my son," and the little girls Cheagire, "my daughter"... (1)

607 We believe we have assembled enough information concerning the fundamental character of the relationship between brothers-in-law in the South American society so that the nucleus of an original institution of compaternity can be seen in it which appears still living among the Nambikwara. The documents here presented suggest (2)

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1. Yves d'Evreux, l. c., II, 1, p. 234.

2. An English version of these observations has been published under the title: "The social use of kinship

411 string (secondary release). Four types ot arrows are used: (1) featherless fishing arrow with three to five prongs; (2) bird arrow with a blunt point; (3) big-game arrow with a lanceolate bamboo point; and (4) poisoned arrow, used chiefly for hunting monkeys, with several barbs which are attached to the point with cotton wrapping and which break easily in the wound, being, therefore, usually protected by a bamboo sheath. The last three have a bamboo shaft and "Arara" feathering. Sewed feathering is known by the central and northern groups but seldom
[726] used. For warfare, big game arrows with serrated bamboo points are used.

278 *Nambicuara* arrow poison is a curare prepared by grating the root of a *Strychnos* shrub, and by infusing (*Eastern Nambicuara*) or boiling (*Central* and *Northern Nambicuara*) it until the water evaporates and leaves a thick brownish substance, which is smeared on a wax-coated arrow point. It can be preserved in tiny pots for several months. Among South American arrow poisons, it is remarkable because it is made of only one vegetable substance and is prepared openly—in some groups by the chief or shaman, in other groups by anyone—without magical practices or taboos. Its great toxic properties were studied by Vellard (1939 b).

Other poisons of unknown composition are used for amorous or political revenge. They are in the form of powders and are kept in tubes made of feather quills, bamboo, or other woods, each ornamented with paintings and cotton or bark wrappings.

411 Clubs are carved in the shape of a flattened or cylindrical pointed spade; the handle is often adorned with black and white plaiting of philodendron bark and bamboo strips. Their purpose is mostly ceremonial.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

601 Kinship terms identify parallel-cousins with siblings, and cross-cousins with potential or actual spouses. Cross-uncles and cross-aunts are called by the same terms as parents-in-law and grandparents; parallel-uncles and parallel-aunts are equated with parents. Similarly, parallel-nephews and parallel-nieces are classed with children, and cross-nephews and
[582] cross-nieces with children-in-law. Marriage is between cross-cousins or between the maternal uncle and his niece. Monogamy is the rule, but
[595] polygyny is the privilege of the chief and other important men. Polygyny is usually with several sisters (sororal) or with a woman and her daughters by a former union. The first wife runs the household, subsequent wives being assistants to the husband. The deficiency of
[838] available women which results from polygyny is compensated by homosexuality between adolescent male cross-cousins (Lévi-Strauss, 1943 a).

622 The village is ruled by a chief, but each of the nomadic bands into which it splits during the dry season is led by a secondary chief. Chief-

621 people are seldom met together, the average size of the bands being
twenty individuals, women and children included. This demographic
collapse cannot possibly have taken place without affecting the structure
of the band. But here, too, we do not need to concern ourselves
121 with such questions as the type of political organization in earlier times.
It is probably more difficult to understand Nambikuara sociology now
than it was thirty years ago. Perhaps, on the contrary, the much reduced
Nambikuara band offers, better than in the past, a privileged
field for a study in social anthropology. My contention is that, precisely
on account of its extreme impoverishment, Nambikuara political
structure lays bare some basic functions which may remain hidden in
more complex and elaborate systems of government.

[361] Each year, at the end of the rainy season, that is, in April or in
early May, the semi-permanent dwellings laid in the vicinity of the
621 gallery-forest where the gardens are cleared and tilled, are abandoned
and the population splits into several bands formed on a free choice
basis. Each band includes from two to about ten families usually tied
by kinship. This may be misleading when a band is met, for one easily
gets the impression that it is formed as an extensive family. It
601 does not take long to discover, however, that the kinship tie between
[602] two families belonging to separate bands may be as close, and eventually
closer, than between two families inside the same band. The
[582] Nambikuara have a simple kinship system based on cross-cousin marriage
and the subsequent dichotomy between "cross" and "parallel" in
every generation. Therefore, all the men in one generation are either
"brothers" or "brothers-in-law," and men and women are to one another
either siblings (true or classificatory) or spouses (true or classificatory).
Similarly, children are, in relation to the adults, either sons
and daughters (true or classificatory) or nephews and nieces, which is
the same as actual or potential children-in-law.[3] As a result, there is
no great choice of terms to express kinship, and this explains why kinship
inside the band may appear closer than it actually is, and kinship
between people belonging to different bands more remote than shown
602 by genealogies. Furthermore, a bilateral cross-cousin marriage system
functioning in a relatively small tribe must produce a progressive
621 narrowing, and even a multiplication, of the kinship ties between any
two individuals. This is a supplementary reason preventing family

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[3] C. Lévi-Strauss. "The Social Use of Kinship Terms among Brasilian Indians." American Anthropologist, 45 (3) 1943.

621 Elótasu band. This is the custom among all the Eastern Nambicuara bands.

601 The kinship terminology belongs to the bifurcate merging type. The term *tayántasu* (grandfather) and the term *quatahdínisu* (grandmother) are extended to the brothers and sisters of one's grandparents. The term *awínisu* (father) and the term *ahakínisu* (mother) are extended to father's brother and mother's sister, respectively. Father's sister is termed *ahaínusu* and mother's brother *asúnusu*. A man calls his older brother *akandnusu*, his younger brother *dawdídnisu*, and his sisters *awaídnasu*, these terms being extended to parallel cousins. The terms for son (*akirúru*) and daughter (*akenéru*) are extended to the children of a man whom ego calls brother. The terms for sister's son and daughter are *asuétu* and *asíntu*, respectively, these terms being extended to the children of anyone whom ego calls sister. The term for male cross cousin is *asúkisu* and that for female cross cousin, *dasésu*. There is just one term for grandchildren, *quatasdiserawa*.

The only affinal kinship terms which we could obtain were the terms wife (*asésu*) which bears a close relationship to female cross cousin; husband (*amesdísu*); and the terms for father-in-law (*asúnusu*), and mother-in-law (*ahaínusu*), which are identical to the terms for mother's brother and father's sister. Whether women employ different kinship terms was not ascertained owing to the fact that the women refused to discuss the matter and the male informants persisted in going to sleep when the subject was broached.

582 The kinship terminology supports the statement made by the Nambicuara that cross-cousin marriage is preferred. Excepting one Elótasu woman all the wives in Julio's band were Waklítisu and cross cousins of their husbands. At the death of
587 the husband the wife and children pass to the
768 deceased husband's brother. Women sometimes marry their mother's brothers. Residence is patri-
591 local although when marrying a woman from another band, the man sometimes remains with his wife's band for a while. Band membership, as has been stated, is determined by matrilineal descent.

622 The powers of the chief are limited to leadership in such activities as hunting, planting, trade, and ceremonies. Raids, although organized by the chief, are not led by him. The chief admon-

[p. 99(a)]

THE SOCIAL USE OF KINSHIP TERMS AMONG BRAZILIAN INDIANS

By CLAUDE LEVI STRAUSS

121 607 THE kinship system of the Nambikuara Indians of the Western Matto Grosso is one of the most simple in Brazil. At the same time it is typical of a sociological pattern, cross cousin marriage, which according to our present information seems to have been very common throughout South America. The object of this article is to compare the familial organization of the Nambikuara with that of other tribes described in the older literature and to show that a certain kinship tie, the brother-in-law relationship, once possessed a meaning among many South American tribes far transcending a simple expression of relationship. This significance, still observable in Nambikuara culture, is both sexual and politico-social; and, owing to its complexity, the brother-in-law relationship may perhaps be regarded as an actual institution. Since the sixteenth century travellers and sociologists have failed to devote sufficient attention to the phenomenon, probably because it could readily be interpreted as a development of the imported Iberian *compadre* relationship. In our opinion, on the contrary, the brother-in-law relationship, together with its remarkable implications, constitutes an indigenous aboriginal institution based on the pattern of native culture. Nevertheless, it presents a striking example of convergence in which the native and Latin-Mediterranean institutions show numerous apparent similarities overlying important structural differences.

131 133 The Nambikuara Indians are settled on the upper courses of the feeders of the Tapajoz River, between the eleventh and the fifteenth parallels. Their territory consists of a semi-desert savanna, which contrasts with the narrow gallery forests along the main waterways. The fertile soil of these forests allows [511] the natives to cultivate a few gardens in the rainy season, but during most of the year the Nambikuara subsist mainly by hunting and gathering wild food. 177 Compared to the majority of Brazilian tribes, their cultural level is low. As they were discovered only in 1907 and as they had practically no contact with white civilization between the year of the Rondon-Roosevelt Expedition in 1914 and the time of our own field work in 1938–39, their familial and social organization may be considered still intact.

601 The Nambikuara kinship system may be summarized as follows: All the father's brothers are classified together with the father and are called "father," and all the mother's sisters are classified with the mother and are called "mother." The father's sisters and the mother's brothers are classified together with the spouse's parents and the parents' parents in a single category which denotes simultaneously the cross aunts and cross uncles, the mother-in-law and father-in-law, and the grandparents. Passing to Ego's generation, the parallel cousins, both the children of the father's brothers and of the mother's sisters, are merged with siblings and are called "brother" and "sister," Turn-

ing to the children of the father's sisters and of the mother's brothers, a man 601 ●
calls all his female cross cousins (to one of whom he is or will be married)
"wife," and all his male cross cousins "brother-in-law;" conversely, a woman
calls all her male cross cousins (among whom her actual or potential husband
is numbered) "husband," and all her female cross cousins "sister-in-law." No
terminological difference is made between actual and potential spouses. The
members of the next younger generation are similarly divided into "sons" and
"daughters" (Ego's own children and parallel nephews and nieces) and "sons-in-law"
and "daughters-in-law" (Ego's cross nephews and nieces), since these
are or may be the spouses of his children.

The system is somewhat complicated by secondary distinctions made between 601
elder and younger siblings and by the fact that another kind of marriage
——between a maternal uncle and his niece—is also practised. This new pattern 595
usually appears in the polygynous unions which, in the prevailingly monogamous
Nambikuara society, are the privilege of the chief. This point needs
some elaboration. Nambikuara polygyny results from the fact that, subsequent
to a first marriage having all the characteristics of the common (i.e., the cross
cousin) form, a man may contract one or more unions of somewhat different
nature. Actually, the position of his new wives is not the same as that of his
original one, and, although constituting real marriages, the later unions are
nevertheless psychologically and economically different from the first. The
atmosphere in which they evolve is less conjugal and more like a kind of
amorous friendship. The younger wives cooperate more extensively in the
numerous tasks imposed on their husband because of his special social obligations.
Furthermore, the activities of these women do not conform as closely
as those of the first wife to the general pattern of the sexual division of labor.
Finally, they are younger and are classified, in relation to the earlier wife, as
"daughters" or "nieces." Such "oblique" unions (that is, between members
of different generations) may also take place in monogamous marriages, but
less frequently. Although their occurrence among the Nambikuara is an important
point in our demonstration, the consequent modifications of the kinship
system are not essential for the purposes of this article and we may therefore
omit further mention of them. Our present observations will be limited to 607
the special implications of the brother-in-law relationship which is expressed
through the reciprocal terms *asúkosu* (Eastern dialect), *tarútę* (Central and
Western dialect) or *iδpą* (Northern dialect).

It must be emphasized immediately that this useful translation of the native term is not in any way accurate. While the *asúkosu* is a man's male cross cousin and also his potential brother-in-law, since the persons calling each other *asúkosu* (or *tarútę* or *iδpą*) call each other's sisters "wife," it is only in particular instances that one or more of the individuals involved is, in fact, the wife's brother or the sister's husband or both. The meaning of the term *asúkosu*

687 is consequently much wider than "brother-in-law" as we understand it, including as it does approximately half the masculine members of a man's generation; the rest, of course, receive the name "brother" (consanguineous or
601 ☐ classificatory). It should be noted that in the Nambikuara kinship system men alone have brothers-in-law and, conversely, women alone have sisters-in-law.

602 Only in the case of brothers-in-law are the Nambikuara conscious of a link between a special type of behavior and the position occupied by a kins-
687 man in the relationship system. Generally speaking, there are no rules of avoidance or of privileged familiarity between particular kinds of relatives. The relations with the spouse's parents do not differ substantially from those with the parallel uncle and aunt and, although it is true that relations between consanguineous or classificatory siblings are rather reserved, the natives are unable to define this diffuse behavior. As a matter of fact, while siblings and parallel cousins do not avoid each other, they do not joke or even talk together unless there is a special reason for doing so. Sisters-in-law, on the contrary, comport themselves very freely. They laugh and joke together and render each other small services, such as rubbing each other's back with urucu paste. And, more especially, exceptional relations are revealed when one passes to the brothers-in-law.

607 We have already mentioned the partial polygyny which exists in the group. The chief or shaman periodically withdraws several of the youngest and
838 prettiest women from the regular cycle of marriages; consequently, young men often find it difficult to marry, at least during adolescence, since no potential spouse is available. The resulting problem is solved in Nambikuara society by homosexual relations, which receive the rather poetical name *tamindige kiˀändige*—"sham love." Relations of this kind are frequent among young men and are more publicly displayed than heterosexual ones. Unlike most adults, the partners do not seek the isolation of the bush, but settle close to the camp fire in front of their amused neighbors. Although the source of occasional jokes, such relations are considered childish and no one pays much attention to them. We did not discover whether the partners aim at achieving complete sexual gratification or whether they limit themselves to such sentimental effusions and erotic behavior as most frequently characterize the relations between spouses. In any event, the point is that homosexual relations occur only between *male cross cousins*.

We never learned whether or not the same relations continue to exist between adult cross cousins; it does not seem likely. Nevertheless, the freedom and demonstrativeness displayed by brothers-in-law toward one another are not characteristic of the relations between brothers or between the members of any other class of relatives. One often sees among the Nambikuara (who, in fact, like to indulge in expressions of affection) two or three men, married and

lateral or the patrilateral cross cousin; nevertheless, the chosen interpretation 571
stresses the male side in Nambikuara society, or, let us say, it shows a strong 607
tendency in this direction. At the same time we can see in such a solution a
specifically social structure beginning to superimpose itself on the formerly 582
simple familial units.

We do not intend in any way to base a theory of the origin of dual organizations 571
on these restricted observations, the character of which is mainly
anecdotal. However, this is a case where "the characteristic features of the 607
sib organization are in some measure prefigured among sibless tribes";[1] as a matter of fact, in order to fulfil the main requirements of a system of exogamic moieties, it would be sufficient for the new unit, once fixed, to retain the recollection of its dual origin by preserving the habit of not mingling the camp fires.

Moreover, the extension of the "brother-in-law" relationship provides an 571
instance of the increasingly superior position of the men within the group, 607
since it is through the men that group alliances are brought about, just as 562
wars are waged by men.

The preceding observations have a further value, since with their help we 000
may be able to interpret sociological information found in the older literature on South America, especially that dealing with the Tupi of the Brazilian coast.

There are striking similarities between several features of the Nambikuara 114
kinship system and what may be inferred about the ancient familial organization 171
of the coastal Tupi. When describing small details of Nambikuara daily
life, one is often tempted to quote Jean de Léry or Yves d'Evreux, so accurately 601
do their words apply to certain live features of Nambikuara society, notwithstanding the fact that they were written four centuries before this culture became known. As a matter of fact, several metaphysical themes are common to both cultures and, indeed, certain names in the Nambikuara religious vocabulary have a conspicuously Tupi origin. The most important similarities, however, are those involving the kinship systems. In both cultures the same three principles of familial organization are stressed and are apparently similarly expressed: First the dichotomy of the parents' brothers and sisters between parallel uncles and aunts, called "fathers" and "mothers," and cross uncles and aunts, called "fathers-in-law" and "mothers-in-law;" secondly, the marriage of cross cousins with the correlative assimilation of parallel cousins to "brothers" and "sisters"; and, finally, the avuncular marriage, which, among the ancient Tupi, seems to have taken the form of a preferential union between the mother's brother and the sister's daughter.

An excellent text by Anchieta gives evidence of the occurrence of the first 114
principle, as well as showing signs of the existence of the other two: 171

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[1] Robert H. Lowie, *Family and Sib* (American Anthropologist, Vol. 21), p. 28.